



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 • MADISON, WI 53708

May 12, 2010

Mr. Karl J. Ostby, Chairman
Southeastern Regional Transit Authority
1315 43rd Ave.
Kenosha, WI 53144

Dear Mr. Ostby:

As you know, the 2009-2010 Wisconsin Legislative Session has come to a close. In the last weeks of the session significant effort was put forth to pass legislation intended to enhance the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Transit Authority's (SERTA) efforts to obtain a "New Starts" grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee (KRM) commuter rail line. This legislation failed. It has come to our attention, however, that the SERTA may still submit a "New Starts" application to the FTA for the KRM commuter rail line and impose an \$18 car rental tax to fund KRM.

It is our understanding that the SERTA was hesitant to submit the "New Starts" application until the proposed Southeast Wisconsin regional transit authority legislation (AB 723) - which would have regionalized the transit system in Southeastern Wisconsin, increased the sales tax in Milwaukee County to fund transit, and created new funding sources for transit in Kenosha and Racine Counties - passed the legislature. We were informed that the SERTA believed that the FTA would not approve the "New Starts" application without passage of AB 723. As you are well aware, AB 723 failed to pass before the legislature adjourned. We also understand that the SERTA has been reluctant to enact the \$18 car rental tax without passage of AB 723.

In reviewing the SERTA's proposed agenda for Monday, May 17, we have noted that the Authority will consider the submittal of the "New Starts" application as well as enactment of the \$18 car rental tax. If it is the intention of the Authority to impose the tax and submit the application, can you provide us with the information from FTA that makes the Authority believe that the application will be sufficient without the enabling legislation? Has the Authority received an indication from the FTA that the rental car tax is a sufficient funding source for the entire Southeastern Wisconsin transit system (buses and KRM)?

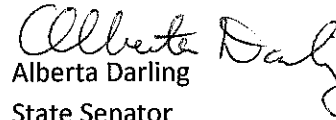
We are extremely concerned that you will submit an application that is doomed to fail and blindly enact a car rental fee for no purpose other than to continue to fund the SERTA, which has done nothing since it was created in the 2009-2010 state budget but spend tens of thousands of dollars on public relations consultants and lobbyists.

As elected officials in Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee Counties we would hope that the SERTA would reevaluate the need to forward the KRM application to FTA and most definitely not impose a rental car tax on our residents that would serve no public purpose.

Sincerely,



Robin Vos
State Representative
63rd Assembly District



Alberta Darling
State Senator
8th Senate District



Samantha Kerkman
State Representative
66th Assembly District




Mary Lazich
State Senator
28th Senate District



Scott Gunderson
State Representative
83rd Assembly District



Mark Honadel
State Representative
21st Assembly District



Jim Ott
State Representative
23rd Assembly District



Leah Vukmir
State Representative
14th Assembly District

CC: Tom Barrett, City of Milwaukee
John Dickert, City of Racine
Peter Hansen, Racine County Board
Lee Holloway, Milwaukee County Board
Joseph Clark, Kenosha County Board
John Antaramian, City of Kenosha Representative
Earl Buford, City of Milwaukee Representative
Jon Henderson, Racine County Representative
Jody Karls, City of Racine Representative

Chris Layden, City of Milwaukee Representative
Michael Mayo, Sr., Milwaukee County Representative
Julia Taylor, Governor's Representative
Kenneth Yunker, Executive Director, SEWRPC